



Press-Gazette photo by Joan E. Gutheridge

**Father and son:** Bay Communications president Tom Pohlman, left, and his son, Dan, vice president, are shown in their business at 2040 Radisson St.

## Bay Communications began as a basement enterprise

**By Patricia Munson**

Press-Gazette correspondent

Tom Pohlman started Bay Communications from the basement of his town of Preble home in 1952.

His job as night engineer at WTAQ Radio (now WBAY) gave him the time to repair two-way radios during the day.

"Back in those days," Pohlman said, "all the repair work was done on the road."

So his wife, Eunice, took all the service calls while Pohlman was on the road making the repairs.

"My first customer was Ace Cab," Pohlman said.

Shortly afterward he had the two-way radio repair business for the city of Green Bay's police, fire, street and park departments. Then he branched out to Brown County and surrounding counties.

For eight years Pohlman built his business until in 1960, he gave up radio engineering.

From his basement, Pohlman moved Bay Communications to Mason Street in 1966, and in 1985

### All in the family

built its present 8,000 square foot facility at 2040 Radisson St.

Today, Bay Communications has more than 500 accounts and serves the Northeastern Wisconsin area with six service vans and 12 employees.

"Unlike what it was when I started," Pohlman said, "much of today's repair work is done at the 'bench.' You fix what you can on the road, but electronics are more complicated today.

"When I started, everything was crystals," he said. "Now you program with a computer."

According to son, Dan, who has an electrical engineering degree and an MBA, today's equipment is also more reliable.

Dan Pohlman has worked with his father since junior high school, and is now the vice president of Bay Communications. He has engineering, operations and scheduling responsibility.

"He handles the field end," Pohlman said.

"And Dad handles the office end," Dan responded.

Pohlman's other son, Stephen, chose the insurance business, but Stephen's wife, Mary, works in the office.

Bay Communications has been associated with Motorola since 1956, Pohlman said.

"We're probably one of the oldest authorized Motorola service companies in the country," he said.

Pohlman is obviously proud of his employees.

"Some of our people have been with us for over 15 years," Pohlman said.

Pohlman sees retirement in front of him soon.

"It's great to be able to have someone to pass this business on to," Pohlman said.

Bay Communications now services internal communications systems, sells and installs cellular telephones, sells trunked radio systems, maintains antenna sites and closed-circuit TV systems, and is introducing a new pager line in June.